

Single Process Initiative

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING A CONCEPT PAPER

Open communication is the key to preparing a successful concept paper. Before pen is put to paper, there should be open discussion between the contractor, the customer, Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA), and the DCMC Contract Administration Office (CAO) to explore the viability of the proposed change.

It's important to note up front that Government representatives should encourage and help the contractor with development of the concept paper. However, **it is up to the contractor to prepare and submit concept papers.**

Concept Papers should be brief, yet definitive. There is no specified page count, generally they have run four to five pages in length. Concept papers should specifically identify the existing contractual requirement that is to be replaced or modified. Papers should also identify contracts and customers impacted if the paper is approved. When the contractor submits the concept paper to the CAO, each respective customer Program Executive Officer or Program Manager (or designated representative) and the Block Change Team must be notified of the submission and subsequent status.

The success of the Single Process Initiative depends greatly upon the speed with which the block change is implemented. Therefore, the 120-day period specified in Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Technology) Dr. Kaminski's December 8, 1995, SPI memo is a goal that must be respected. **There should be early interface between industry and the Government before a concept paper is submitted.** However, once the CAO receives a concept paper, regardless of whether the paper is acceptable or definitive, the "clock" begins to tick. The clock cannot stop nor restart while waiting for an acceptable or definitive paper. CAOs should report receipt of the concept paper as soon as it is received and use the remainder of the initial 30-day period to obtain additional data as needed. Disagreements should be escalated up the chain of command.

A "definitive" concept paper includes the elements needed to effectively evaluate a proposed change and **allow rapid judgment by the Administrative Contracting Officer (ACO).**

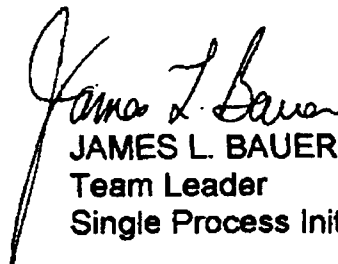
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These elements include

- a description and short summary of the process to be considered;
- methodology to move to the proposed common process and a schedule for transition;
- an explanation of how the contractor will implement the process. How does the contractor propose to maintain quality and schedule during the transition?
- a summary of the proposed metrics that will be used to measure effectiveness and compliance. How will the contractor demonstrate acceptability and reliability (technical feasibility) of the process?
- a rough order of magnitude cost benefit analysis (to include current and future costs and savings). Will implementation be advantageous (cost effective) to the Government ?
- an explanation of the impact on existing contracts and an assessment of future impacts. What is the impact (program risk) to the Government and the contractor if the proposal is approved/disapproved ?
- an assessment of changes required in the Government's involvement in the process; and
- an explanation of the required regulatory/contractual changes.

The description should be in sufficient detail to enable the Government to determine if a more detailed cost impact proposal for current contracts will be required. If the contractor provides a "definitive" concept paper, a formal proposal is not needed and it is possible to move directly from the proposal development phase to the first step in the approval phase.

It's important to remember that a concept paper can come in many different formats and styles because it needs to be tailored to the specific process and situation prevailing at that location. The elements listed above are to be used only as a guideline. The fact that some elements listed above may not be included in a particular concept paper does not make the paper inadequate. It is expected that additional information can be supplied during the review process. The bottom line is: time is money. Do not let preconceived ideas or checklists *block* the Block Change process. Questions concerning the Single Process Initiative may be addressed to the Single Process Initiative Team at DCMC Headquarters at (703) 767-2471 or DSN 427-2471.


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